DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 045 216 PS 004 200

TITLE	Appalachia Preschool Education Program, Charleston, West Virginia: A Three-Part Preschool Program Combining a Television Program, Paraprofessional Home Visitors, and a Mobile Classroom. Model Programs--Childhood Education.
INSTITUTION	American Institutes for Research, Palo Alto. Calif.
SPONS AGENCY	National Center for Educational Communication (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.; Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	OE-20143
PUB DATE	70
NOTE	17p.; Booklet is one in a series of 34 descriptive booklets on childhood education programs prepared for the White House Conference on Children, December, 1970
AVAILABLE FROM	Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 (HE 5.220:20143, $0.20)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Childhood Needs, *Disadvantaged Youth, Educational Television, Home Visits, *Mobile Classrooms, Pamphlets, *Preschool Education, *Preschool Programs, Program Descriptions, *Rural Areas, Skill Development, Subprofessionals
IDENTIFIERS	Appalachia Educational Laboratory

ABSTRACT

A breakthrough program to reach rurally isolated children to prepare them for first grade, the Appalachia Preschool Education Program was begun in September, 1968. Four-hundred fifty 3- to 5-year-olds are participating in three treatment groups: (1) children who, in or near their own homes, are shown a daily educational television program, have a weekly session with a home visitor, and a weekly visit to a mobile classroom, (2) children who receive the television program and the home visitor, but do not attend the mobile classroom, and (3) children who receive the television program only. A control group receives no preschool education. Significant gains on cognitive and language skills were shown by children in Groups 1 and 2. With certain modifications, such as increased use of the mobile classroom, the program will continue until the spring of 1971. Evaluation will continue until 1972. Sources of more detailed information are provided for this program, specifically, and for Model Programs Childhood Education, in general. (Author/NH)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

PS 004200
ED045216

OE-20143

Model Programs

Childhood Education

Appalachia Preschool Education Program

Charleston, West Virginia

A three-part preschool program combining a television program, paraprofessional home visitors, and a mobile classroom

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Elliot L. Richardson, *Secretary*
Office of Education
Terrel H. Bell, *Acting Commissioner of Education*
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
Donald Rumsfeld, *Director*

Prepared by the American Institutes for Research under contract with the Office of Education and cooperative funding by the Office of Economic Opportunity in support of the White House Conference on Children. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED--Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Therefore, the program described herein, like every program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance must be operated in compliance with this law.

Superintendent of Documents Catalog No. HE 5.220:20143

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON: 1970

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402 - Price 20 cents

ED 045216

FOREWORD

This booklet is one of 34 in a series of promising programs on childhood education prepared for the White House Conference on Children, December 1970. The series was written under contract by the American Institutes for Research for the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Office of Child Development and the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Within the broad area of childhood education the series includes descriptions of programs on reading and language development, the disadvantaged, preschool education, and special education. In describing a program, each booklet provides details about the purpose; the children reached; specific materials, facilities, and staff involved; and other special features such as community services, parental involvement, and finances. Sources of further information on the programs are also provided.

The Appalachia Preschool Educational Program, directed by Dr. Roy W. Alford of the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, is a demonstration project to provide preschool education to rural children. Instead of requiring small children to travel long distances to a traditional kindergarten classroom, the project educates the children in or near their own homes through a daily television program, a weekly session with a paraprofessional home visitor, and a weekly visit to a mobile classroom.

The population of Appalachia is widely scattered among hollows and hills and isolated by poor access roads. In 1967 there were 532 one-room schools in operation in Appalachia; two- and three-teacher schools are even more numerous. Many isolated parents keep their children out of school until the children are 7 because they feel a 6-year-old child is too small to walk the long distance to school. In West Virginia, a child who lives more than 2 miles from his school or a source of transportation is not required to attend school. The problems involved in providing preschool education to this population are obvious.

A PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET APPALACHIA'S NEEDS

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory, one of 15 regional laboratories established under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, covers West Virginia and portions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. AEL is committed to the idea that a major breakthrough in education is needed to overcome the problems of Appalachia. In September 1967 a proposal calling for a home-oriented program for preschool children was submitted to the board of directors of the AEL. In October, a planning conference with people knowledgeable in early childhood education was held to develop a strategy for implementing a field test and a framework of objectives for the program. In November, a subcontract was negotiated with West Virginia University to study the characteristics of the Appalachian preschool child and develop a set of behavioral objectives appropriate for him. The television station to be used and the site for the field test were selected in the spring of 1968. The field test was begun in September 1968 and will continue until the spring of 1971. Thus, if the program is not adopted by the Appalachian States, the children's involvement will end in 1971. The evaluation portion of the project will continue until 1972.

The objective of the program is to develop an alternative preschool education which will prepare children to perform the tasks in language, cognition, motor skills, and orienting and attending skills that are expected of the average child at the first-grade level. The criterion for success is 90 percent performance by all children with IQ's of 90 and above on the behavioral objectives taught in the program.

The 450 3- to 5-year-olds in the program are divided into three groups. A *package* group of 150 children receives the television program, a weekly session with the home visitor, and a weekly visit to the mobile classroom. A *TV-HV* group of 150 children receives the television program and the weekly visit but does not attend the mobile classroom. The third group, the *TV-only* group, receives only the television program. A control group, selected from children in Putnam County, West Virginia, outside the viewing area, receives no preschool education.

THE CHILDREN AND THEIR COMMUNITY

To select the sample group, the eight paraprofessionals who were to be the home visitors covered assigned areas asking three questions at each house which could be reached from a road.

"Do you have any children between 3 and 5 years of age? Do you have a television set? Do you get good reception on Channel 4?" If affirmative answers were received to all three questions, parents were asked if they would like their children to be in the program. Children who were to visit the mobile classroom had to live within 50 miles of Beckley, West Virginia, and close to a place where the van could be parked and connected to an electrical outlet.

The families in the program live in four counties of southern West Virginia over an area of about 800 square miles. All are rural farm or rural nonfarm families as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The families are stable--most have a father living in the home who works steadily. Most of the fathers work at semi-skilled jobs; most of the mothers do not work. Usually these men and women have completed the 11th or 12th grade. Although a few of the families have incomes under $1,000 a year, the majority earn at least $6,000, own their own homes, and have cars.

These families not only live in isolated communities but many are isolated within the community. In some cases, the home visitor is the only nonfamily adult to visit them during the week.

Many of the children see no children outside their family except when they attend Sunday school. Most have never been to a library, zoo, or museum.

THE PROJECT STAFF

The staff of the project is divided into two groups. The curriculum materials team, located in Charleston, produces the television program and accompanying materials to teach the program objectives and is responsible for the development of all three parts of the program. The staff of this team includes the on-camera teacher, a research teacher, a utilization specialist, a production manager and part-time production assistant, a media specialist, a photographer, and a team leader. The team has leased office space and technical services from the WSAZ-TV studio where "Around the Bend," the project's television program, is taped. All studio facilities, an engineer, two cameramen, and a sound man are available to the curriculum materials team for 2 hours each afternoon. The curriculum materials team produced 140 new programs in the first year of the field test, 102 programs the next year, and will produce 83 new programs during 1970-71. There are 170 program broadcasts each year.

PS 004200

409-460 O - 70 - 2

The field team, with offices in Beckley, consists of eight home visitors, a certified van teacher and her aide, an instructional monitor, and a field team leader. The team is made up of all the people who work directly with the children in the sample population. The field office contains the project's circulating library of over 400 children's books, which are used in the mobile classroom and distributed by the home visitors.

Field team members received 3 weeks of preservice training by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory. The first 2 weeks involved orientation to the project, a study of child growth and development, and an introduction to materials and activities appropriate to preschool-age children. The third week was devoted to sensitivity training with emphasis on interview techniques and acceptance of existing conditions. Thereafter, the field team met one afternoon weekly for inservice training; at the same time the home visitors picked up the materials they were to deliver to parents during the following week. Inservice training is now held every 2 weeks.

HOME VISITS

The eight home visitors range in age from 18 to 63; all have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and live in the area they serve. Each home visitor, driving her own car, visits about 30 children a week during the school year, spending from 30 to 45 minutes at each home. In the morning, on her first visit each day, she watches "Around the Bend" with the child, recording on a coding sheet the number of positive and negative responses he shows to each portion of the program. For the rest of the visits that day, she asks each mother whether her child watched the program that day, which activities he followed, and which ones bored him. All this information is returned to the curriculum materials team for their use in improving the format and content of the television program.

The home visitor brings a new book for each child, exchanging it for the book she brought the previous week. She also brings a program guide for the next week of "Around the Bend" and any special materials the child will use, and advises the mother of any household materials he will need while he watches the program. The mother is given a guide to the objectives taught in each television program, and the weekly *Around the Bend Newsletter*, which contains suggestions about reinforcing activities for the child to do during the week as well as poems, songs, or

stories. Some parents also request books from the home visitor on infant care or child development, which the project provides.

The home visitor spends time with the child in activities that reinforce the television program, encouraging the child to talk and serving as a model for the mother in teaching the child concepts of number, size, and color, and in helping him learn to read and write. The mother is encouraged to participate in the visit and is offered advice on learning activities the child may enjoy. The home visitor, in addition to providing an example to the mother, represents to the child a nonfamily adult who is specifically interested in him. She helps the child overcome any shyness or fear of strangers and convinces him of the importance of his thoughts and ideas. The children look forward to visits of their "teachers" and are proud to have an adult come to see them.

"AROUND THE BEND"

"Around the Bend," shown for a half-hour each weekday during the school year, features Patty, the on-camera teacher, and her puppet friends. Patty is not presented as a teacher, but as a friend who has interesting things to show and discuss. Using film shot on location, she might explore a place these children

rarely see, such as a library. She reads stories and poems, sings songs, paints, makes collages, and listens to music; she also introduces letters, numbers, colors, and concepts of classification. Each day's program has a theme, such as making choices, which is emphasized in the stories and songs on the program. New letters of the alphabet are introduced and reinforced periodically. Magic Hollow--inhabited by puppet squirrels, skunks, foxes, and other local animals--is visited daily, and events there serve to emphasize the concepts being taught that day.

Three months into the school year, the children in the project are tested on the objectives that have been presented on television up to that time. Programs are then planned to reemphasize any objectives that the children have not yet mastered. In a survey parents indicated that they and their children like "Around the Bend" at least as well as "Captain Kangaroo" and much better than "Romper Room." ("Sesame Street" is not shown in the area.) The television program is designed to involve each child as much as possible: he may be asked to point to something on the screen, draw or make something, sing a song, or respond to a question. Mothers watch the program with their children and encourage them to participate in the activities.

THE MOBILE CLASSROOM

The specially designed mobile classroom van, driven alternately by the teacher and her aide, may travel over a hundred miles a day. The van makes nine stops a week at points where electrical outlets are available, no more than 2 miles away from the homes of children who will attend. Only 15 children attend the classroom at one time. Class is held in the van for about 2 hours, and a snack funded by a Department of Agriculture program is served at the end of this period while the children listen to a story.

The van is equipped with heating and air-conditioning, a television set, movie and slide projectors, a tape recorder, listening post, stove, refrigerator, chemical toilet, and a sound-responsive light organ, as well as a variety of books from the project's circulating library, an easel, flannel boards, records, puzzles, and manipulative toys. All the tables, chairs, and equipment in the van are at child height. The activities in the mobile classroom are planned to correlate with the television program. The van teacher decides on the appropriate activities to teach the objectives introduced on the program. The children are offered different experiences depending on their knowledge and previous experience in the classroom. In addition to reinforcing

the concepts introduced by the television program and the home visitor, the mobile classroom experience is intended to promote social growth by giving the children practice in sharing, working together, and following directions.

TESTS SHOW GAINS FOR SOME GROUPS

In 1970 a battery of tests was administered to samples of the three experimental groups and the control group to determine whether children in the treatment groups scored differently on tests measuring cognitive and language growth, and whether 5-year-olds who had been in the program 2 years met the program criterion for success. The package and TV-HV groups showed significant gains over the TV-only and control groups, especially on the Appalachia Preschool Test, which is designed to measure the specific objectives of the program. The package group did not show significant gains over the TV-HV group, which resulted in a decision to increase the amount of time each child spends in the van from 1 1/2 to 2 hours, and to use the mobile classroom to teach more toward specific objectives. The 5-year-old children in the treatment groups mastered 65 to 80 percent of the program objectives. (The program criterion of 90 percent is based on 3 years in the program.)

An attempt was made to measure social learning skills in the package and TV-HV groups through interaction analysis of children placing furniture in a model house. Groups of four children who did not know each other were videotaped while they completed this task. The coder then placed each child's activities every 3 seconds into one of 28 categories. The 28 categories for social skills measurement included "initiates antagonistic action," "asks a question," "withdraws for security," and "stops working." According to this analysis, the TV-HV group showed a greater tendency to seek security than the package group. The package group was less withdrawn and showed more enthusiasm. This analysis indicated that certain social skills were related to the mobile classroom experience.

COST OF THE PROGRAM

The experimental project will cost a total of about $1 million. However, the program could be provided to all 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds in the State of West Virginia at an annual cost of $235 per child. Establishing standard kindergarten classrooms for the same children would cost $496 per child per year.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Information about the program is contained in *Appalachian Advance*, January-February 1970, pp. 9-28, available from the

National Education Association
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20036

at $1 a copy.

Information on the program and copies of "Evaluation Report: Early Childhood Education Program, 1969 Field Test" are available from:

Dr. Roy W. Alford
P.O. Box 1348
Charleston, West Virginia 25325
(304) 344-8371

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1970 O - 409-460

MODEL PROGRAMS--Childhood Education

This is one in a series of 34 descriptive booklets on childhood education programs prepared for the White House Conference on Children, December 1970. Following is a list of the programs and their locations:

The Day Nursery Assn. of Cleveland, Ohio
Neighborhood House Child Care Services, Seattle, Wash.
Behavior Analysis Model of a Follow Through Program, Oraibi, Ariz.
Cross-Cultural Family Center, San Francisco, Calif.
NRO Migrant Child Development Center, Pasco, Wash.
Bilingual Early Childhood Program, San Antonio, Tex.
Santa Monica Children's Centers, Calif.
Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction, Salt Lake City, Utah
Dubnoff School for Educational Therapy, North Hollywood, Calif.
Demonstration Nursery Center for Infants and Toddlers, Greensboro, N.C.
Responsive Environment Model of a Follow Through Program, Goldsboro, N.C.
Center for Early Development and Education, Little Rock, Ark.
DOVACK, Monticello, Fla.
Perceptual Development Center Program, Natchez, Miss.
Appalachia Preschool Education Program, Charleston, W. Va.
Foster Grandparent Program, Nashville, Tenn.
Hartford Early Childhood Program, Conn.
Philadelphia Teacher Center, Pa.
Cognitively Oriented Curriculum, Ypsilanti, Mich.
Mothers' Training Program, Urbana, Ill.
The Micro-Social Preschool Learning System, Vineland, N.J.
Project PLAN, Parkersburg, W. Va.
Interdependent Learner Model of a Follow Through Program, New York, N.Y.
San Jose Police Youth Protection Unit, Calif.
Model Observation Kindergarten, Amherst, Mass.
Boston Public Schools Learning Laboratories, Mass.
Martin Luther King Family Center, Chicago, Ill.
Behavior Principles Structural Model of a Follow Through Program, Dayton, Ohio
University of Hawaii Preschool Language Curriculum, Honolulu, Hawaii
Springfield Avenue Community School, Newark, N.J.
Corrective Reading Program, Wichita, Kans.
New Schools Exchange, Santa Barbara, Calif.
Tacoma Public Schools Early Childhood Program, Wash.
Community Cooperative Nursery School, Menlo Park, Calif.